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GUIDANCE CURRICULUM FOR INCREASED SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND MOTIVATION FOR CAREER PLANNING. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS IN SELECTED AREAS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, VOLUME III.

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THE METHODOLOGY USED IN DEVELOPING EXPERIMENTAL CURRICULUM MATERIALS (ED 010 625) FOR AN INNOVATIVE GUIDANCE PROGRAM IN CAREER PLANNING WAS PRESENTED. RESEARCH DATA, GATHERED DURING A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF STUDENT ATTITUDES AND INTERESTS RELEVANT TO CAREER PLANNING, WERE USED FOR THE CURRICULUM CONTENT. THE CONTENT FORMAT WAS ORGANIZED TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK OF RELEVANT AND MEANINGFUL INFORMATION FOR YOUTHS TO USE IN GAINING PERSPECTIVE ON THEMSELVES AND IN ACQUIRING APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES INVOLVED IN CAREER PLANNING. THE THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT OF DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS (TRYON AND LILIENTHAL, 1950) WAS USED AS ONE BASIS FOR CURRICULUM PLANNING. A TAXONOMY FOR EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES IN THE AFFECTIVE DOMAIN (KRATHWOHL AND OTHERS, 1964) WAS USED FOR DEFINING CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES, THE NATURE OF DESIRED LEARNING EXPERIENCES, AND MEANS OF EVALUATION. ALTHOUGH THE CURRICULUM WAS DEVELOPED FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE SESSIONS, A PRELIMINARY TRYOUT INDICATED THAT IT COULD BE READILY ADAPTED FOR USE WITH UPPER ELEMENTARY AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AS WELL. STUDENTS EXPOSED TO THE CURRICULUM DURING THE TRYOUT APPEARED TO (1) RESPOND FAVORABLY TO THE NOVELTY OF CONTENT, AS IT WAS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEIR PLANS AND PERSONAL CONCERNS, AND (2) USE AN OPEN-ENDED, SCIENTIFIC APPROACH IN RELATING THE CONTENT TO THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE. RELATED REPORTS ARE ED 010 623 THROUGH ED 010 626. (JH)

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GUIDANCE CURRICULUM FOR INCREASED SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND MOTIVATION FOR CAREER PLANNING

30 November 1966

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Planning and Development of Research Programs in Selected Areas of Vocational Education: Volume III

GUIDANCE CURRICULUM FOR INCREASED SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND MOTIVATION FOR CAREER PLANNING

Project No. 5-0047
Contract No. OE-5-85-106

Vivian S. Sherman

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I. Introduction

The question of what vocational guidance curriculum experiences are appropriate for junior high school youngsters was the focus of one task of Project No. 5-0047, Contract No. OE-5-85-106. Clearly, what youngsters are and aspire to do in the realm of career and educational planning when they reach high school age was in the process of becoming at or before junior high school. How this problem was pursued, what conclusions about curriculum needs were reached, and what was proposed and developed to fill these gaps comprises the content of this final report.

A review of the literature served to accentuate the uneasiness many adults feel about the full development of human potential. Developing youngsters' vocational orientations is a matter of cultural urgency, a problem of pervading importance facing all agents of socialization. It is intricately involved with a multiplicity of factors, e.g. past and present opportunities for development, existing and available personal and physical resources, environmental histories, external expectancies, sex role identification, and personal value orientations. It significantly affects educational planning and the way in which young men and women accept their roles as citizens of the larger community. It reflects development of the self, which is at the very core of human personality and action. Little wonder that adults express concern when youngsters show a lack of stability and realism in their career choices, drop out of school, question cultural values, resist parental or societal pressures, express negative attitudes toward educational requirements, and reveal feelings of inadequacy, lack of direction, and minimal motivation to work. On the shoulders of these youngsters rests the future of our culture.

The fact that there is considerable individual variation shown by young people in depth and scope of self-understanding and motivation toward career exploration suggests that guidance programs have not been able always to bring about adequate development of self, so crucial to orientation toward and establishment in a career. Some students seem secure and stable in career choices; others appear uncertain, dependent on others, and either avoid or are unable to assume responsibility for career planning. Perhaps their sights are not yet on the future and they simply require a longer period of exploration or maturation. Nor is it the sole responsibility of vocational guidance personnel to bring about desirable attitudes toward self and the world of work. This task must be shared by all who deal with young people. Yet in spite of individual differences in readiness or assistance from adults, most youngsters must make choices about educational curricula in late junior high or early high school years, whether or not they are prepared for such decisions. It seems that youngsters are expected to look at themselves, survey careers avail-

able and appropriate for them to pursue, set an objective at a relatively early age, and work steadfastly toward it. Many young people do not seem ready to achieve this important developmental task when they are expected to. Perhaps it would be better to consider vocational exploration as a life-long process of choosing, rather than as an event in time. Numerous changes in vocation probably will be a reality in youngsters' futures.

Traditionally, vocational education programs have been at the high school level, rather than in earlier formative periods of youngsters' lives, e.g. at elementary and junior high school. Focus of these programs appears to have been largely on providing occupational information and developing proficiency in selected occupations. The scope may have been too narrowly tied to occupational information, valuable as this is, judging by the multitude of attitudinal problems that exist. Programs at earlier ages have been infrequent and less clearly defined than those in senior high schools, yet this is a time when prevocational exploration and orientation might be universally afforded and readily received. The need for innovation at these levels is evident.

Several ideas emerged from further reading which seemed basic to such innovation. If students thoroughly and systematically explored their own self-perceptions, attitudes, personal values (basic ingredients in motivation), achievement, abilities, and diverse career possibilities, attitudinal and motivational problems at later ages might be minimized. This could serve to balance pressures toward early closure with opportunities to test and explore and increase self-differentiation so basic to the process of self-development.

If youngsters were given opportunity to project their own thoughts, feelings, or experiences against those of others, perhaps with support and acceptance of a group whose members have problems similar to their own, they might gain insight into self. If guidance were viewed not as something externally applied but as a structuring of situations conducive to internal reorganization of knowledge, understandings, attitudes, and values (i.e. personality integration), creative growth within the individual might be furthered. A person's own awareness of his emotions, values, and varying environments is what frees him to become more self-directive.

If educators relinquished their traditional preoccupation with the intellect (with what is to be learned) and focused upon the total individual (the learner), attitudinal-motivational deficits might be alleviated. The whole person is, after all, the reality with which educators deal.

It was with this background of thought that the writer, during the spring of 1966 in the Palo Alto Unified School District, helped to gather data of a developmental nature. The decision-making program of this district, designed to teach students to consider alternatives, outcomes, and probabilities in formulating their own educational and vocational plans, was in operation. The district's own follow-up research data on college selection and performance as predicted by grade point average, structured in booklet form, was being presented by counselors to all ninth graders in the district. The role of personal values had become very evident to those involved in this program. It seemed logical that the newly gathered survey data could become an appropriate supplement to the academic achievement data being fed back to youngsters in this district. If they could gain a broadened perspective on self, how they came to be what they are and what environmental expectancies exist (both internal and external), they might become more self-directive and be able to assume increased responsibility for self. This kind of information had been requested in the questionnaire because it was of interest to the researchers. It also should interest students, especially since it concerns people their age. (A detailed description of this survey appears in Volume II. Preliminary pages of the curriculum materials (Appendix to Volume III) provide some description and much of the actual research data appears in simplified graph form at various places in the sequence of learning experiences.)

Reflection about the value of taking a cross-cultural approach in gaining perspective on self led to the conclusion that youngsters in other districts also might profit from projecting themselves against such data. In fact, it seemed reasonable that greater contrast might lead to questioning of differences in attitude between themselves and the research group and to scrutiny of their own environmental influences.

Thus it was that the idea for these particular materials was generated. The next question was how this might be accomplished.

II. Method

The first step in curriculum design was a review and reorganization of questionnaire items on the basis of relationship to one another and to meaningful broad areas that might be structured from the research data. These emerged as follows:

Youngsters' Perspective of Purposes of Education and Key Problems Facing Them (Career and educational planning located in a broad context)

Status of Career Planning (Status of individual students' planning, areas of interest, degree of specificity or vagueness in planning, and careers considered in the past)
Developmental Perspective on Self (Individual variation due to heredity, influencing people and events, early interests)
Self-Concept (Important dimensions of self, influencing environmental-situational factors, and self-perceptions)
Occupations (Relationship of personality characteristics to occupations, occupational stereotypes, requirements and opportunities related to current career interests)
Planning for Career Exploration (Locus of responsibility for planning and decision-making, clarification of values and goals in decision-making, clarification of plans)

Stating educational objectives in behavioral terms should be a basic concern of educators. Specifying desired behavioral changes can clarify both the nature of learning experiences and procedures for evaluating the extent to which these changes occur. To structure curriculum in these terms the over-all format needed to be:

OBJECTIVES - MEANS OF ELICITING RESPONSE - EVALUATIVE DEVICES

Since attitudes involving the total individual were the realm in which change was desired and needed, the taxonomy of affective objectives (Krathwohl, et al., 1964), seemed particularly appropriate. This classification system has not yet been widely used and needs practical application in order to evaluate its usefulness as an educational tool. It seemed especially suited to development of the social-emotional dimensions of self. It rests upon the process of internalization and includes major categories of receiving or attending, responding, valuing, organization, and characterization by a value or value complex. When we expect youngsters to assume a life stance this highest category is essentially what we are asking them to do. The higher levels of the taxonomy demand considerable maturity and may not be achievable in the schools, but the system is integrally involved with the self, which often determines response to affective stimuli. It also is closely related to cognitive behaviors; high level intellectual processes definitely are needed in career exploration and in formulating future plans.

Because this taxonomy is new it was felt that repeatedly spelling out the various classification components as they are described in the original document (Krathwohl, et al., 1964), translating them into behaviors desired in the specific learning experiences, and hypothesizing what a student might say to himself in this situation would serve to clarify objectives while simultaneously teaching the various subdivisions. The same coding system

was used throughout the materials as is used by the authors of the taxonomy. In order to see how these affective objectives might relate to the cognitive domain, those intellectual processes which seemed to be demanded by the particular learning experiences were given for each lesson. These were considered as important objectives which could be achieved at the same time as the desired affective behaviors were realized. In these materials, however, cognitive objectives were placed secondary to the primary purpose of bringing about attitudinal change. Just as acquisition of information included in the materials also might have been described as an objective, it was felt that these traditional concerns might supersede the original intent simply because they represented familiar emphases. No evaluative devices were included for cognitive objectives, although they could be added to the materials.

Methodological considerations were given for each lesson, including some described by the authors of the taxonomy. Specific practices, plans, or materials also were described. These represented what occurred to the writer as a logical way to move systematically from one level of the taxonomy to another within the structure of accumulated research data. Many other activities could have been developed--and still can be. Like a hat, these may be tried for size and practicability. Sample student work sheets, questionnaires, and reading and writing materials were included for all lessons.

Since concern was with the whole person, constant reminders were included with each lesson of how these learning experiences might be used to meet the multiple needs of maturing youngsters, i.e. developmental tasks (Tryon and Lilienthal, 1950). These were listed after each lesson and referred to continuously to make certain the activities and assignments allowed sufficient opportunity for boys and girls to relate to social groups and youngsters of the same and opposite sex, achieve independence, develop an objective, scientific approach to their own value system, etc. This provides one type of theoretical foundation for curriculum development based upon knowledge of child growth and development.

Evaluative devices were developed to correspond with each learning experience which it was hoped would be consistent with the objectives sought. These are rudimentary and in need of practical application and refinement, but they represent a step in the direction of systematic and continuous appraisal of student progress, as opposed to periodic academic achievement tests.

Once the over-all curriculum structure was built, tables were converted to graphs, using as a model the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade mathematics textbooks adopted by the State of California (Silver Burdett). Graphs were sequenced in order of difficulty to correspond

with the kinds of graphs used in these textbooks. Pictorial symbols which it was hoped would be meaningful and attractive to students were incorporated into them. Significant sex and grade level differences which appeared on the tables were noted with asterisks on the student graphs.

It was not possible as a part of this project to evaluate through practical application the effectiveness of the complete set of materials. Preliminary tryout of four of the six sections, however, was done in four high school and two junior high school classrooms in order to determine student responsiveness over as wide as possible an age range. These practical applications, plus critical appraisal by school district guidance personnel, resulted in some modification of teacher instructions and in lay-out of teacher evaluative devices. Methodological considerations in Section VI, for example, were considerably enlarged following their use. Final checking, refinement, and reproduction of all teacher and student materials followed.

III. Results

The results are the completed set of vocational guidance curriculum materials developed to bring about increased self-understanding and career motivation in junior high school youngsters. These appear under separate binding as an appendix to this final report. Preliminary pages in this document make it possible for those materials to be used as a separate entity by teachers and counselors.

The materials (1) are based upon the theoretical construct of developmental tasks, (2) attempt to apply the taxonomy of affective objectives and relate cognitive objectives to them, (3) focus primarily upon the self as a crucial variable in developing a career orientation, and (4) utilize research data as content. They are organized according to the following format, which allows for behavioral definition of goals (both affective and cognitive) and careful delineation of practices which further achievement of developmental tasks:

OBJECTIVES	MEANS OF ELICITING RESPONSE	EVALUATIVE DEVICES
Affective classification Specific behavioral responses Possible student attitudinal response Cognitive processes demanded	Methodological considerations (guiding principles, tactical moves, etc.) Specific practices, plans, or materials Relationship to developmental tasks or growth needs of learner	Approach which seeks consistency with objective and provides a means of continuous diagnosis and record-keeping

IV. Discussion

The reaction of school personnel to the materials was very enthusiastic. Students from 6th through 12th grade had no difficulty reading the graphs and seemed especially responsive to the novel content and small group interaction which frequently was built into the learning activities.

Scheduling was flexible and adaptation up or down for ability and age level was easy. Supplementation by further discussions, audio-visual devices, and individual conferences was possible. The activities and areas of interest seemed to interest both boys and girls.

Evaluative devices were practical. Teachers had little difficulty using them while serving as observer during sessions taught by the writer. They felt many of the evaluations could be done in the regular process of teaching and that they would provide insight into individual differences and needs, particularly those youngsters who fall in the middle, unobtrusive categories of behavior. Classroom observation of behavior needs to be carefully delineated and some caution is necessary in drawing conclusions about overt behavior. Youngsters, for example, who appeared not to be paying attention were, on closer examination, considerably involved. Inferences must be drawn from observations of more than one kind of behavior. Usage can result in carefully described categories of behavior.

Cautions about over-generalizing from research data gathered from a relatively small and select sample are described in some detail in the preliminary pages of the curriculum materials, as are the problems of interpreting percentages from small groups of students. Numbers of boys and girls at times were small, especially when multiple choice responses to some questionnaire items were possible.

V. Conclusions

The most important recommendation is that the effectiveness of these materials in accomplishing what they attempt to do (increase self-understanding and career motivation) be tested experimentally. This should be done in a variety of situations which involve different types of youngsters. It might be desirable to make some adaptations for particular groups prior to systematic evaluation and keep a careful record of specific procedures that were used.

There is much room for development and expansion of the learning sequences, especially into the realm of non-verbal learning.

This would be of great value to youngsters with limited verbal-quantitative abilities. Supplementing with such experiences might serve to involve students sufficiently to help them to derive maximum learning from the verbal-quantitative experiences these materials offer.

The evaluative devices constitute a system of record-keeping which, if sufficiently refined, could open the door to research involving the response of individual learners to particular teaching-learning experiences, a type of research much needed in education. They also hold potential for case study diagnosis and development of the needs of individual students.

Having a complete guidance curriculum could lead to a new conception of the counselor's role. If these materials were taught by counselors (and teachers became participant-observers, or vice versa), they would have an opportunity to become acquainted with students as they function within a group environment. It also would help students to know counselors better as individuals. Often a one-to-one relationship camouflages student behaviors and attitudes which it is important for the counselor to understand. Individual counseling could follow these group experiences quite naturally.

If the materials are incorporated into the regular academic curriculum, e.g. English or social studies classes, they can help to break down the archaic dichotomy between "academic" and "vocational" camps. These materials are intellectual in nature.

Even though the materials are sequentially developed, they can be flexibly used. Any of the sections could be pulled out for use with particular groups with minimal adaptation necessary. It is possible they could be sequenced over several grade levels.

The content seems to be a natural for developing boys and girls. It is concerned with their reality plans,with them as unique individuals. The use throughout the materials of an open-ended, questioning, scientific approach which places responsibility on the student should bring about increased involvement. As described in the preliminary pages of the materials, getting students to perform the role of researcher may be a key factor in the extent to which the materials accomplish what they seek to do.

Probably one of the greatest values of these materials is that they can become an effective vehicle for the inservice education of teachers, which is one of the most serious problems in education today. Their use could lead to application of the affective taxonomy in other content areas, to increased emphasis on behavioral goals, to the creation of new devices for measurement, and to development of the total individual.

VI. Summary

Study of what might constitute appropriate vocational guidance curriculum materials for junior high school youngsters led to the conclusion that there was a need for innovation to fill some existing gaps in the crucial realm of career motivation. These areas included a need to broaden the scope of vocational education beyond that of providing information and skill proficiency in selected occupations to include (1) greater concern with the process of career exploration at an earlier age, (2) concern with the total individual (e.g. attitudes, feelings, self-concept, values), and (3) a conception of guidance not as something externally applied but as a structuring of situations conducive to internal reorganization or personality integration. If these gaps could be filled, the result might be increased self-understanding and self-direction.

Curriculum materials were developed with the hope of filling these gaps. Research data of a developmental nature (described in Volume II and translated into graph form) were utilized as content in order to provide youngsters a framework of relevant and meaningful data for gaining perspective on themselves. The theoretical construct of developmental tasks was used as one basis for curriculum planning. The taxonomy for educational objectives in the affective domain was used in defining objectives, the nature of the learning experiences, and the means of evaluation. Cognitive behaviors were related to the affective-attitudinal objectives.

Although these materials were developed primarily with junior high school youngsters in mind, preliminary tryout indicated that they can be adapted for use with youngsters of varying abilities and motivational levels from upper elementary grades through the senior high school. Students who have used the materials appear to respond to the novelty of content, which is directly relevant to their real plans and personal concerns, and to use of an open-ended, scientific approach.

Although these materials need further practical application, development, and systematic evaluation, they hold promise for (1) the inservice education of teachers, (2) educational research that looks at the response of individual learners to particular learning experiences (through the use and further development of evaluative devices), (3) use of a case study approach in education, (4) a new conception of the counselor's role (using group curriculum experiences to increase understanding of youngsters and as a precursor to individual counseling), (5) integration of "vocational" and "academic" education, (6) expansion with non-verbal learning experiences, and (7) opportunity to teach verbal-quantitative skills with meaningful content and in this way develop more adequate self-concepts for intellectuality. The extent to which these materials can bring about increased self-understanding and motivation for career planning remains to be determined.

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